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Testimony on HB 5366 Transportation Committee March 9, 2022

Chairs Haskell and Lemar, Ranking Members Carney, and Somers, and distinguished members of the Transportation Committee, I thank the committee for raising **HB 5366: An Act Concerning Revisions to The Motor Vehicle Statutes**, specifically section 15.

Section 15 of this bill seeks to address an issue that has long been a problem for the handicap and disabled community – the illegal use of handicap placards by unauthorized persons to park in handicap designated parking spaces. It creates a 13-member Handicap Placard Advisory Council tasked with thoroughly reviewing handicap placard policies and recommending best practices for granting and using these removeable windshield placards. The Council would also provide educational outreach to medical professionals, law enforcement, and the public to raise awareness of the proper issuance and use of the placards.

Handicap windshield placards and license plates are provided to individuals that meet certain qualifying disabilities and are meant to provide convenience and ease of mobility to and from a vehicle to a business. However, many of us have seen instances in which a vehicle with a handicap placard parks in a handicap parking space, but the sole occupant, the driver, exits the vehicle with no signs of disability or mobility problems. According to the Department of Motor Vehicles, one of the most common misuses is when someone, other than the individual with the disability, is utilizing the placard for personal convenience to gain access to the handicap parking space. This misuse sometimes forces those who rely on these spaces to have to park in another space which could adversely impact their ability to get where they are going.

It's time that this problem be given more review and consideration, and I respectfully request the committee to support this section. Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on HB 5366: An Act Concerning Revisions to The Motor Vehicle Statutes.